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PROPOSED TALKING POINTS

GORBACHEV IN LONDON

So far Gorbachev has been successful in achieving what he apparently went to London to do: to put public political pressure on the Administration at Geneva and in the anticipated arms limitations talks thereafter.

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While impressing his hosts with his urbanity and confident political style, Gorbachev quickly seized the initiative and obtained the headlines he sought.

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- o His message has been tightly focussed on the need to halt the arms race and threat of nuclear war.
- o He consistently insists that this can't be done without preventing the militarization of space, and that whereas the USSR is prepared to discuss "radical" reductions in arms, this can't be done unless the US makes prior concessions on space -- i.e., SDI and/or ASAT testing. Hence the US must offer up SDI/ASAT just to get the ball in play.
- o His moderate tones have gained headlines in the US, Western Europe and Japan, where the front pages carry promising messages and the inside pages present varying degrees of informed commentary.

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His secondary theme -- that the USSR and Europe have common goals and that the US is the obstacle to lessened tensions -- also has been effective.

- o Gorbachev has skillfully associated Soviet views with those of European leaders [REDACTED]
- o The European media have strongly replayed his theme that neither the USSR nor Europe wants to be part of a new arms race caused by SDI.
- o The West German media has been more level-headed and dispassionate than the British and French, but not much.

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The media, having determined that Gorbachev resonates well and is a good story, have helped him over the discomforting questions voiced in Parliament on Monday, Gorbachev's sharp comeback, and small public protests by relegating these events to tertiary position and noting them in passing as minor blemishes.

Gorbachev's undiplomatic but brief remarks in response to the hostile questions in Parliament about religious freedom in the USSR will serve him well as a strong defender of the motherland when he returns to Moscow.

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